

of 28.7 million people, half of whom live below the severe poverty line, the Ways and Means Committee instead held what's called a mock markup session last week. There were no recorded votes. It was a mock session. No recorded votes. No Member outside of the committee was invited to testify or comment, and they kept the old fast track procedure where they're going to bring it up here and not allow any amendments. It's another inside deal, because if you really had a full deal, a square deal, a fair deal, the majority of Members of this Congress would not vote for it, so they have to put handcuffs on everybody in order to try to maneuver it through here.

Had I been allowed to submit testimony on the record at the hearing, I would have voiced my strong opposition to this NAFTA-style agreement that is destined to further exploit the struggling working classes in Peru and the United States. Unless it results in new jobs for our country and growing trade balances, rather than more deficits, no Member should support it. Any trade agreement that passes here should have mutually beneficial approaches which yield trade balances and jobs in our country.

I'd ask my colleagues to defeat this exploitative NAFTA expansion model for Peru.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1815

#### ANITA HILL AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, sometimes you come to the floor in a moment of personal privilege and you come because you feel compelled to speak to those and for those whose voices cannot be heard in this forum. And today I do such a task, and the task involves more than a decade-old allegation that now has been re-ignited, given new life through the memoirs of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas.

Everyone has a right to defend themselves and to express the concerns that they may have regarding their reputation. All of us do. But I think it is important to take issue with the broad media coverage that Justice Thomas has secured over these days with an intent, it seems, to malign, if you will, the words, the testimony, and the truth told by Anita Hill.

Though over four decades have passed since title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited employ-

ment discrimination based on race, sex, color, national origin, or religion, a glance at today's New York Times reminds us that workforce harassment is, unfortunately, still raising its ugly head.

I am, frankly, offended by the attempt by Justice Thomas to suggest that Ms. Hill was not telling the truth. I do so because, of course, in the forum that he utilizes, Ms. Hill is not able to answer her accuser.

In listening to an interview that Ms. Hill did, she emphasizes that she was telling the truth, that there was, in her opinion and others who were witnesses, the same. But I really wonder why we would have to condemn the idea that sexual harassment does not occur and why, in trying to suggest that it doesn't occur, we would have to malign a person's actions or personality with such phrase as: Well, what was she like? Well, she could defend herself. The sentence was not finished. Defend herself against what? Suggesting that she was not the demure, religious, conservative person, I guess, that maybe she was alleged to have portrayed during those hearings before the Senate.

I didn't see any of that. I saw a young, energetic, but yet quiet, frightened, and intending-to-tell-the-truth young woman. I saw a young woman with courage who refused to back down in spite of the lights of all the world.

Mr. Speaker, sexual harassment is alive and well. You can ask some of my constituents at Ellington Air Force Base in Houston, TX. You can ask individuals who have called my office who have indicated that that is what is occurring to them in the workplace.

Ms. Hill's actions during that time were brave. To bring them up and drag her through the mud again in 2007 with little opportunity for her, a professor in Oklahoma, to have the same kind of hearing is unfair and does a great disservice to the work that women have done, that the National Organization of Women has done, and that so many Members of Congress have done, who have tried to bring equality to women.

The controversy raised national awareness about sexual harassment in the workplace, with the number of sexual harassment complaints received by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission spiking from 6,127 in 1991 to 15,342 in 1996. Why? Because women felt that at last someone had broken the glass ceiling and they could speak up.

The American Association of University Women reported that, according to a 2002 study of eighth to 11th grade students, 83 percent of girls and 78 percent of boys have been sexually harassed. So it crosses gender.

I believe a Supreme Court Justice should not have taken the opportunity in a public forum to give disdain to that which we are now trying to overcome. So I want to put into the RECORD, Mr. Speaker, the New York Times op-ed by Anita Hill, "The Smear This Time," and I would simply ask,

Mr. Speaker, that we would recognize that sexual harassment is alive and well and that Anita Hill should not be the scapegoat for someone else trying to repair their reputation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to discuss an issue that continues to plague our society: sexual harassment. Though over four decades have passed since Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited employment discrimination based on race, sex, color, national origin, or religion, a glance at today's New York Times reminds us that workplace harassment is, unfortunately, still rearing its ugly head in our society. I am extremely concerned about sexual harassment, which statistics indicate remains pervasive in the United States, as well as the rest of the world.

Mr. Speaker, though the phrase "sexual harassment" was coined in the 1970s, it came to the forefront of our national conscience in 1991, with the confirmation hearings for Clarence Thomas's nomination to the Supreme Court. Anita Hill, then a law professor at the University of Oklahoma, alleged that Thomas sexually harassed her during her tenure as his assistant at the U.S. Department of Education and then on his legal staff at the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Despite her testimony before the Senate, Thomas was eventually confirmed by a narrow 52-48 margin.

As Ms. Hill writes in today's New York Times, "The question of whether Clarence Thomas belongs on the Supreme Court is no longer on the table—it was settled by the Senate back in 1991." And yet, Mr. Thomas has chosen to use his prestige and his position to once again launch an attack against Ms. Hill, again blaming the victim of his alleged harassment. In his recently published book "My Grandfather's Son", for which Thomas has received a reported \$1.5 million, Thomas smears Ms. Hill's name, not only calling her testimony lies, but also personally attacking her, describing her as "touchy and apt to overact," and her job performance as "mediocre." In recent interviews surrounding the publication of his book, Thomas has gone even farther, questioning her political views as well as her religious convictions, stating on the TV show "60 Minutes", "She was not the demure, religious, conservative person that they portrayed."

Mr. Speaker, I am appalled that Justice Thomas has once again victimized Ms. Hill, now a professor of social policy, law and women's studies at Brandeis University and a visiting scholar at the Newhouse Center for the Humanities at Wellesley College. Not only is this yet another case of blaming the victim of abuse, it sets a dangerous precedent of reversing the substantial progress toward combating sexual harassment that we have made since 1991. As Ms. Hill eloquently writes, "Our legal system will suffer if a sitting justice's vitriolic pursuit of personal vindication discourages others from standing up for their rights." Mr. Speaker, sexual harassment is already grossly underreported, and this underreporting will only worsen if the women and men who are victimized are made afraid of decades of retribution, such as Ms. Hill continues to face, should they speak up about the abuse.

Ms. Hill's bravery in standing up before the Senate and the country in 1991 and sharing her experiences has led to a number of positive repercussions. The controversy raised national awareness about sexual harassment in